ICARC NEWSLETTER

March 31 2026

Much thanks to the ARRL Foundation
for its support provided to the
ICARC tower and repeater
upgrades at its remote site

Officers for 2026:
President – Bill Robinson, KC3ZAF
Vice President - Joe Rougeux, KD3BCW
Treasurer - Chris Edwards, N3VFK
Secretary - Larry Freeman, N3LT

Board of Directors for 2026
1. Craig Bigler, AB3XA
2. Cass Fitzgerald, N3FLO
3. Ralph Timblin, N3UDI
4. Phil Kopczyk, K3PJ
5. Elmer Sorisio, KB3WG

LOCAL HAPPENINGS:

Check out the new website look for W3BMD, courtesy of Ian Bigler-KC3DTE.
https://www.qsl.net/w3bmd/

Things going on at the ICARC Remote site on Rhine Rd.:

March 9, 2026 was the first day since November 2025 suitable for working at the tower site. The GMRS antenna was installed on the new tower along with a wireless weather station, the latter belonging to Deryl Mack-KC3YZW. Also on March 14 and March 17 several members were at the site to do some cleanup in preparation for the grass mowing season as well as getting the feed lines cut and prepped for their final configuration on the new repeaters. There were eight people working so a lot got done over the three days.

On March 21, 2026, the first educational event of the season was initiated. The event involved the construction of an "electrically quiet" receive antenna in the form of a Loop on the Ground (LoG). This included winding the transformers, drilling the boxes, mounting and soldering the connectors. There were seven attendees with six complete antennas being constructed and tested. The loop consisted of 60 ft of insulated wire attached to two screw terminals on the transformer box. The antennas were attached to the radio through either 50 or 75 ohm coax depending upon the type of connector (BNC or F) used.

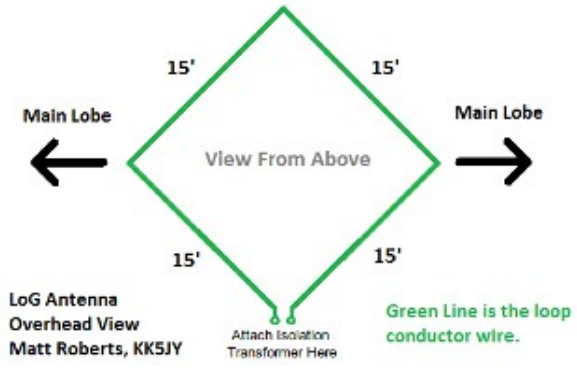
The antennas were, qualitatively, compared to a commercial end-fed sloped antenna erected by Ralph Timblin-N3UDI. Using an ic7300, stations were heard on 40m and 20m with the signals from the sloped antenna being at an S9 level with nominal background noise of 6-8 S-units. While the signal levels, for the same stations, from the LoG antennas were lower at about S3-S5, the background noise measured by the 7300 was less than S1, and barely moved the S meter. Qualitatively, the perceived Signal to Noise ratio for the LoG antennas "seemed" better than that of the more sensitive Sloped antenna which was used as the reference. Also, surprisingly, the LoG antennas worked better than expected on 20m.

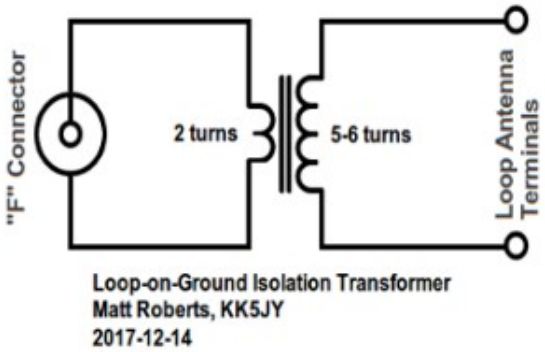
Hopefully, there will be a future event involving these antennas, where some quantitative measurements are performed to get a true determination of the system signal to noise ratio. Just so you know, such receive antennas are very useful during contesting, particularly on the lower bands like 160 m and 80 m due to high noise levels that tend to exist in these frequency ranges. The small loop antennas are said to be more sensitive

to the Magnetic component of the Electro-Magnetic (EM) field than normal linear antennas and therefore contribute more to the overall signal while being less sensitive to the electrical component of the field. The loop configuration is generally known to be less sensitive to electrical noise. These small loop antennas are often referred to as "Magnetic Loops".

Participants: Bill Seminsly-WW3HAM from the Fort Armstrong Wireless Association (FAWA), and from ICARC there were Bill Robinson-KC3ZAF, Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO, Dave Dzelsky-N3DZ, Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG, Ralph Timblin-N3UDI, Deryl Mack-KC3YZW, and Larry Freeman-N3LT. It was a great event that worked out very well. The project was based on the following article (check it out) LoG antenna https:https://kk5jy.net/LoG

Basic Antenna and Transformer schematics are shown below along with a few photos:





Also, later in the afternoon hot dogs, and brats were cooked over a campfire and self served on buns. Chili, and other condiments along with chips were present for the eating. It was aother great day for an outing involving measuring, cutting, soldering, antenna testing, and of course eating!

NATIONAL HAPPENINGS:

From arrl: W1AW operating schedule:

The weekly W1AW and monthly West Coast Qualifying Runs are sent on the normal CW frequencies used for both code practice and bulletin transmissions.

Please note that a W1AW Qualifying Run replaces a regularly scheduled code practice transmission on any particular day and time.

The complete W1AW Operating Schedule may be found on page 28 in the March 2026 issue of QST or on the web at www.arrl.org/w1aw-operating-schedule.

CW: 1.8025 3.5815 7.0475 14.0475 18.0775 21.0675 28.0675 50.350 147.555

DIGITAL: - 3.5975 7.095 14.095 18.1025 21.095 28.095 50.350 147.555

VOICE: 1.855 3.990 7.290 14.290 18.160 21.390 28.590 50.350 147.555

Notes:

CWs = Morse Code practice (slow) = 5, 7.5, 10, 13, and 15 WPM

CWf = Morse Code practice (fast) = 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 13, and 10 WPM

CWb = Morse Code Bulletins = 18 WPM

CW frequencies include code practices, Qualifying Runs, and CW bulletins.

DIGITAL = BAUDOT (45.45 baud), BPSK31, and MFSK16 in a revolving schedule.

Code practice texts are from QST, and the source of each practice is given at the beginning of each practice and at the beginning of alternate speeds.

On Tuesdays and Fridays at 2230 UTC (6:30 PM EDT), Keplerian Elements for active amateur satellites are sent on the regular digital frequencies.

A DX bulletin replaces or is added to the regular bulletins between 0000 UTC (8 PM EDT) Thursdays and 0000 UTC (8 PM EDT) Fridays.

Audio from W1AW's CW code practices and CW/digital/phone bulletins are available using EchoLink via the W1AW Conference Server named "W1AWBDCT." The monthly W1AW Qualifying Runs are presented here as well. The CW/digital/phone audio is sent in real-time and runs concurrently with W1AW's regular transmission schedule.

All users who connect to the conference server are muted. Please note that any questions or comments about this server should not be sent via the "Text" window in EchoLink. Please direct any questions or comments to w1aw@arrl.org.

In a communications emergency, monitor W1AW for special bulletins as follows: Voice on the hour, Digital at 15 minutes past the hour, and CW on the half hour.

FCC licensed amateurs may operate the station from 1400 UTC to 1945 UTC (10 AM to 3:45 PM EDT) Monday through Friday. Be sure to bring a reference copy of your current FCC amateur radio license.

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(Excerpt from the ARRL Current) Apply Now for 2026 ARRL Teachers Institute

Calling all STEM educators! The ARRL Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology is accepting applications. This isn't your average sit-and-listen workshop. It’s an intensive, hands-on experience where you’ll dive into topics like Robotics and Microcontrollers, Satellite Communications, Weather Data Collection, and Radio Science & Electronics. Get the tools, the knowledge, and the hardware to inspire the next generation of engineers and scientists. Apply Now

What follows is an exerpt from the February 26 ARRL Newsletter:

The National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) Question Pool Committee (QPC) has removed two questions from the General Class question pool and one question from the

Extra Class pool from use.

Due to recently published FCC rule changes affecting the 60 meter band (see previous ARRL News story), General Class questions G1A04 and G1C09 are no longer valid and must be removed from use on examinations. Extra Class question E4D05 must also be removed because it contains more than one correct answer. All affected questions should be removed from examinations as soon as possible.

Updated General Class question pool files, including the errata and new information, have been posted to the NCVEC General Class question pool web page at www.ncvec.org/index.php/2023-2027-general-question-pool-release. The current Element 3 General question pool became effective on July 1, 2023, and it is valid through June 30, 2027.

Updated question pool files have also been posted to the NCVEC Extra Class question pool web page at www.ncvec.org/index.php/2024-2028-extra-class-question-pool-release. The current Element 4 Extra question pool became effective on July 1, 2024, and it is valid through June 30, 2028.

The ARRL VEC advises the amateur radio community, and particularly Volunteer Examiners (VEs), to regularly check the NCVEC website at www.ncvec.org for updates to the question pools, which may include errata and withdrawn questions.

Announcements:

Remember: The ICARC meetings are, generally, scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month. The next ICARC meeting is on Tue, April 7, 2026, 6:30 pm at the Indiana, PA Eat 'n Park Restaurant.

The video links for the old tower take down are given below:

Links for Tower Take-down

Courtesy of Deryl Mack , KC3YZW

https://youtu.be/c1LG7SRu9b0

https://youtu.be/risblzrA_hY

https://youtu.be/zCV7vwqTMjk

Remember: The ICARC Public Service and Information Net happens on each Monday night starting at 8:30 PM using the W3BMD repeater on 146.910/146.310 MHz. (ICARC is an ARRL affliated club). There will often be a second net starting immediately following the primary net with the W3BMD/2 repeater, on 146.655/.055 MHz located at ICARC's Remote site. (Tones for both are 131.8 Hz)
Current Net Control Operators: Phil Kopczyk, Chris Edwards, Stuart Younkin, and Ralph Timblin. We thank you fellows very much. We can always use more.

Attention Technician and General licensees (and prospective hams), have you thought about upgrading?

Do you have trouble making it to an in-person ham exam? Now you don't have that excuse. Groups holding online ham exams have greatly expanded. Some groups are having exams daily. Reportedly it is an easy process if you have a laptop, desktop or tablet with a camera and microphone. Shown below are websites where you can look into testing online.

https://wm7x.net/ One of the most popular. They have videos explaining how it's done.
https://kl7aa.org/vex/remote-testing/
https://hamstrung/sessions/remote Lists remote and in person test sessions.

ICARC Summary Meeting Minutes, 02/03/2026 .

President (Bill-KC3ZAF) called the meeting to order at 18:30 hours.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance:** (Done) Bill brought a real, large Flag
2. **Roll Call:** 14 Attendees- AB3XA, KC3ZAF, N3VFK, N3DZ, N3LT, KA2YOS, K3PJ, N3ARA, WA3BDR, N3QM, K3VAR, KD3BCW, W3CDH, N3UDI

3. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer financial report was accepted.

4. **Trustee's Report:** No report

5. **Secretary's Report:** Preliminary Minutes from 01/06/2026 were read and approved. Progress report on grant was given. indicating all acquisitions for the grant have been received. I

6. **Old Business:** A synopsis of the Winter Field Day (WFD) activities from antenna setup on Friday through operations, and take down on Saturday night and the following Tuesday afternoon, was reported along with 138 claimed contacts. There was some general discussion about the audio noise level in the Lodge with three stations going at once and some discussion about using headphones or other mitigation possibilities were brought up but nothing definitive decided.

7. **New Business:** There was some discussion about next years WFD and whether or not to rent the lodge again next year. The general consensus was that we should rent it again. A motion was made, seconded and approved to rent for 2027.
   There were discussions about the testing sessions coming up in April and October with suggestions of possibly using electronic testing with computers.
   It was suggested that that the membership should be thinking of creating a wish list of things that we need for the club.

8. **Adjournment:** Phil-K3PJ made a Motion to adjourn, seconded by Chris-N3VFK. It was voted upon and accepted. Meeting was adjourned at 19:15 hours

Comment: There was a nice program about DMR presented by Bill Robinson and Dave Dzelsky after the meeting adjourned. It was very informative and interesting; it presented a clear description and demonstration of how DMR works. It likely cleared up some misconceptions about digital phone communications that some of us may have had.